

WILLIAM C. McCORMICK.

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JANUARY 27, 1904.—Committed to the Committee of the Whole House and ordered to be printed.

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Mr. CALDERHEAD, from the Committee on Invalid Pensions, submitted the following

REPORT.

[To accompany H. R. 5603.]

The Committee on Invalid Pensions, to whom was referred the bill (H. R. 5603) granting an increase of pension to William C. McCormick, submit the following report:

This bill proposes to increase the pension of the soldier named therein from \$12 to \$30 per month.

Records of the War Department show that this soldier served as corporal in Company A, One hundred and thirty-second Pennsylvania Infantry, from July 30, 1862, to March 6, 1863, when he was discharged on surgeon's certificate of disability by reason of varicocele.

He again served as private, quartermaster sergeant, and first sergeant in Company C, Thirteenth Pennsylvania Cavalry, from September 17, 1863, to July 14, 1865, when honorably discharged.

Medical records show that he was under treatment in his first service in September, 1862, for rheumatism, and in November, 1862, for diarrhea, that he was wounded in the side in action at Fredericksburg, December 13, 1862, and sent to the hospital December 20, 1862, with contused wound of right shoulder, and returned to duty February 6, 1863.

He is now pensioned under the act of June 27, 1890, at \$12 per month for total inability to earn a support by manual labor, due to left varicocele, dyspepsia, and rheumatism.

He was formerly pensioned at \$2 per month from the date of his discharge from the first service on account of the left varicocele, increased to \$4 from April 21, 1886, and to \$6 from June 27, 1888.

A claim for increase of pension under the general law was rejected in February, 1903, upon the ground that the disability from the left varicocele did not warrant a rating in excess of \$6 per month; and a claim for rheumatism, filed in 1899, was also rejected in 1903 upon the ground that the evidence adduced upon special examination failed to

establish the origin of rheumatism between his discharge from the first service and his reenlistment, during his second service, or from the date of his final discharge.

The claimant alleged that he was taken with sciatic rheumatism ever since after his first enlistment and that he suffered from that disability during his second service and ever since his final discharge.

In support of his claim on account of rheumatism he filed the affidavits of several comrades who served with him in his second service who testified that he was thin and sick and complained of rheumatism in his limbs and back, and that he was unable to do anything requiring exertion; also the testimony of some neighbors that from discharge up to 1871, when he moved to Kansas, he complained of rheumatism in his limbs, and the testimony of his wife and several other witnesses residing in Kansas, that ever since 1871 he had rheumatism in his legs and used a cane in walking quite often and was often confined to his house; and medical testimony as to treatment for sciatic rheumatism since 1888.

The evidence as a whole is insufficient to show that the soldier suffered from rheumatism, as alleged, during his second service, at the time of his discharge, or for many years thereafter.

When last examined on December 6, 1899, the board of surgeons rated him \$4 for a varicocele of the left side of accepted service origin, \$4 for a varicocele of the right side, \$4 for sciatic rheumatism, \$4 for general rheumatism, \$2 for lumbago, and \$6 for slight deafness of both ears.

Medical advice filed with your committee shows that the beneficiary is now (January 12, 1904) suffering from locomotor ataxia and with optic-nerve atrophy, causing total blindness of the right eye, and that vision of the left eye is impaired to such an extent that he can only distinguish light from darkness; that he requires the constant care and attendance of some one, and that in addition to the above he also suffers from an enlarged prostate gland.

Other proof filed with your committee shows that his whole income consists of the pension of \$12 per month, and that he has a wife dependent upon him for support.

It being shown that this soldier is suffering from ataxia and nearly total blindness, and that he is in destitute circumstances, an increase of his pension from \$12 to \$30 per month, following numerous precedents, is warranted, hence the bill is reported back with the recommendation that it pass when the same shall have been amended as follows:

In line 8, before the word "and," insert the words "and Company C, Thirteenth Regiment Pennsylvania Volunteer Cavalry."